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# DIRECT AND INDIRECT/REPORTED SPEECH

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INTRODUCTORY VERB IN  
PRESENT, PRESENT PERFECT OR FUTURE TENSE

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# DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH

There are two ways of relating what a person has said:

- ◆ direct and
- ◆ indirect speech

## Direct speech

- we repeat the original speaker's exact words

*He has just told you, "I am tired."*

## Indirect speech

- we give the exact meaning of a remark or speech, without necessarily using the speaker's exact words (no exclamation marks)

*He has told you (that) he is tired.*

- some other **changes** are usually necessary

- statements, commands, and questions

## STATEMENTS IN INDIRECT SPEECH

- ◆ Indirect statements are normally introduced by

**SAY or TELL+object**

*say+to+object* is less usual

*"I've just heard the news," says Tom.*

*He says / tells me (says to me) (that) he has just heard the news.*

- ◆ **THAT** can be omitted after *say* and *tell+object* (but it should be kept after other verbs like *complain, explain, object, point out, protest* etc.)
- ◆ Alternative introductory (reporting) verbs  
*add, admit, answer, argue, assure + object, boast, complain, deny, explain, grumble, object, observe, point out, promise, protest, remark, remind + object, reply* etc.

# Tenses

- ◆ When the introductory verb is in present, present perfect or future tense - **NO CHANGE OF TENSES**

*Tom says, "I'll never buy that car."*

*Tom says that he'll never buy that car.*

# Pronouns and Adjectives

- ◆ Pronouns and possessive adjectives usually change
  - ❖ from first or second person to third person (except when the speaker is reporting his own words)

*I/you → he/she*

*we/you → they*

*me/my/mine → him/his/her/hers*

*us/our/ours → them/their/theirs*

*you/your/yours → them/their/theirs*

*He/She says, "I have forgotten the combination of **my** safe".*

*He says that **he** has forgotten the combination of **his** safe.*

*She says that **she** has forgotten the combination of **her** safe.*

## IMPERATIVE - COMMANDS, REQUESTS, ADVICE IN INDIRECT SPEECH

- ◆ Indirect commands, requests, advice are usually expressed by

**verb of command/request/advice + object + infinitive**

He says, "*Lie down*, Tom".

He tells Tom *to lie down*.

- ◆ The following verbs can be used

*advise, ask, beg, command, encourage, forbid, implore, invite, order, recommend, remind, request, tell, urge, warn etc.*

- ◆ Negative commands, request etc. are usually reported by

**verb of command/request/advice + object + NOT + infinitive**

"*Don't swim out* too far, boys," he says.

He warns/tells the boys *not to swim out* too far.

## QUESTIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH

- ◆ The introductory verb must be a verb of inquiry: *ask* (can be followed by an indirect object), *inquire*, *wonder*, *want to know* (cannot take indirect object) *etc.*
- ◆ The interrogative form of the verb changes to the affirmative one

*He says, "Where is she going?"*      *He asks where she is going.*

- ❖ the question mark is therefore omitted 
- ❖ with affirmative verb questions this change is obviously not necessary

*He says, "Who lives next door?"*

*He asks who lives next door.*

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- ❖ if the direct question begins with the question word - *WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY, WHEN, HOW* etc. - the question word is repeated in the indirect question:

*He says, "What do you want?"*

*He asks them what they want.*

- ❖ if there is no question word - *IF* (more usual) or *WHETHER* must be used:

*"Is anyone there?", he asks.*

*He asks if/whether anyone is there.*

*"Do you want to leave your luggage or not?", he asks.*

*He asks whether or not I want to leave my luggage*

*or*

*He asks if I want to leave my luggage or not.*

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# INTRODUCTORY VERB IN PRESENT, PRESENT PERFECT OR FUTURE

## Statements

Introductory verb + (indirect object) + (that) + S + P + ...<sup>1</sup>

## Imperative

Introductory verb + indirect object + (not) + infinitive + ...<sup>1</sup>

## Questions

Introductory verb + (indirect object) +  
*wh* or *if/whether* + S + P (no inversion) + ...<sup>1</sup>

## NB

<sup>1</sup>Pronouns and adjectives usually change